

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Prior to the present communication, claims 1, 2, 4-13, 15-24, and 26-36 were pending in the subject application. Claims 1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 17, 18, 21, 23, 28, 29, 32, and 34-36 have been amended, claims 2, 5, 8, 13, and 24 have been cancelled, and claims 37 and 38 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1, 4, 6, 7, 9-12, 15-23, and 26-38 remain pending after the amendments. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added by way of the proposed amendments. All claims that will be pending and under consideration in the present application upon entry of the proposed amendments are shown below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A system for conditioning clinically related billing items, comprising:

an input interface configured to receive a preliminary billing item associated with a clinical event; and

a conditioning engine, the conditioning engine communicating with the input interface to receive the preliminary billing item and analyzing, as a condition precedent to transmitting the billing item to a paying party, the preliminary billing item by comparison against at least one ~~mandatory billing regulatory~~ guideline to determine compliance therewith, ~~and determining whether wherein if the preliminary billing item is determined to comply~~ complies with the at least one ~~mandatory billing regulatory~~ guideline, and upon determining that the billing item complies, dismissing restrictions

from elements in the system that prevent the system from configuring the conditioning engine ~~is configured~~ to transmit the preliminary billing item to the paying party.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 34, wherein the conditioning engine verifies the existence of the at least one of mandatory documentation and affirming data elements by checking evidentiary support for the at least one of mandatory documentation and affirming data elements against a compliance template, wherein the evidentiary support comprises at least one of a patient chart, physicians orders, diagnostic codes, a history and physical record, a medication administration record, a set of progress notes, a treatment plan and a radiology report.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 1, wherein the conditioning engine communicates the preliminary billing item or data related to the preliminary billing item to a holds queue when the preliminary billing item is determined not to comply with the at least one ~~mandatory billing regulatory~~ guideline.

7. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 6, wherein the preliminary billing item or the data related to the preliminary billing item is ~~further reviewed~~ supplemented for satisfaction of the at least one ~~mandatory billing regulatory~~ guideline, while in the holds queue, upon the conditioning engine automatically retrieving clinical documentation from additional data stores.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 7, wherein ~~the further review~~ automatically retrieving comprises automatically conveying a notification to a user to conduct a ~~an at least partly~~ manual search for additional clinical documentation.

10. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 1, wherein the at least one ~~mandatory billing regulatory~~ guideline is stored in a compliance database.

11. (Original) A system according to claim 10, wherein the compliance database is updateable.

12. (Currently Amended) A method for conditioning clinically related billing items, comprising:

receiving a preliminary billing item associated with a clinical event;

analyzing, as a condition precedent to transmitting the preliminary billing item to a paying party, the preliminary billing item by comparison against at least one ~~mandatory billing regulatory~~ guideline to determine compliance therewith; ~~and~~

~~if it is determined~~ determining that the preliminary billing item complies with the at least one ~~mandatory billing regulatory~~ guideline; and

transmitting the compliant preliminary billing item to the paying party.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 35, further comprising verifying the existence of the at least one of mandatory documentation and affirming data elements by checking evidentiary support for the at least one of mandatory documentation and affirming data elements against a compliance template.

16. (Original) A method according to claim 15, wherein the evidentiary support comprises at least clinical documentation, the clinical documentation comprising at least one of a patient chart, physicians order, diagnostic codes, a history and physical record, a medication administration record, a set of progress notes, a treatment plan and a radiology report.

17. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 12, further comprising a step of communicating the preliminary billing item or data related to the preliminary billing item to a holds queue when the preliminary billing item is determined not to comply with the at least one ~~mandatory billing-regulatory~~ guideline.

18. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, further comprising a step of further reviewing the preliminary billing item or the data related to the preliminary billing item for satisfaction of the at least one ~~mandatory billing-regulatory~~ guideline while in the holds queue.

19. (Original) A method according to claim 18, wherein the step of further reviewing comprises performing an automated search for additional clinical documentation.

20. (Original) A method according to claim 18, wherein the step of further reviewing comprises performing an at least partly manual search for additional clinical documentation.

21. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 12, wherein the at least one ~~mandatory billing regulatory~~ guideline is stored in a compliance database.

22. (Original) A method according to claim 21, wherein the compliance database is updatable.

23. (Currently Amended) One or more computer-readable storage media having computer-executable instructions embodied thereon that, when executed, perform a method for conditioning a clinically related billing item, the method comprising:

receiving a preliminary billing item associated with a clinical event; ~~and~~
analyzing, as a condition precedent to transmitting the billing item to a paying party, the preliminary billing item by comparison against at least one ~~mandatory billing regulatory~~ guideline to determine compliance therewith; ~~and~~
~~if it is determined determining~~ that the preliminary billing item complies with the at least one ~~mandatory billing regulatory~~ guideline; ~~and~~
transmitting the compliant preliminary billing item to the paying party.

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Previously presented) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 36, further comprising verifying the existence of the at least one of mandatory documentation and affirming data elements by checking evidentiary support for the at least one of mandatory documentation and affirming data elements against a compliance template.

27. (Previously presented) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 26, wherein the evidentiary support comprises at least clinical documentation, the clinical documentation comprising at least one of a patient chart, physicians order, diagnostic codes, a history and physical record, a medication administration record, a set of progress notes, a treatment plan and a radiology report.

28. (Currently Amended) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 23, wherein the method further comprises a step of communicating the preliminary billing item or data related to the preliminary billing item to a holds queue when the preliminary billing item is determined not to comply with the at least one ~~mandatory-billing~~ regulatory guideline.

29. (Currently Amended) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 28, wherein the method further comprises a step of further reviewing the preliminary billing item or the data related to the preliminary billing item for satisfaction of the at least one ~~mandatory-billing~~ regulatory guideline while in the holds queue.

30. (Previously presented) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 29, wherein the step of further reviewing comprises performing an automated search for additional clinical documentation.

31. (Previously presented) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 29, wherein the step of further reviewing comprises performing an at least partly manual search for additional clinical documentation.

32. (Currently Amended) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 23, wherein the at least one ~~mandatory billing regulatory~~ guideline is stored in a compliance database.

33. (Previously presented) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 32, wherein the compliance database is updateable.

34. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 1, wherein the at least one ~~mandatory billing regulatory~~ guideline includes at least one of mandatory documentation and affirming data elements.

35. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 12, wherein the at least one ~~mandatory billing regulatory~~ guideline includes at least one of mandatory documentation and affirming data elements.

36. (Currently Amended) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 23, wherein the at least one ~~mandatory billing regulatory~~ guideline includes at least one of mandatory documentation and affirming data elements.

37. (New) A system according to claim 1, further comprising a billing capture engine to generate the preliminary billing item, wherein generating comprises extracting potential billable items from a clinical data store.

38. (New) A system according to claim 1, wherein determining whether the preliminary billing item is complies with the at least one regulatory guideline comprises comparing the preliminary billing item against the compliance template, wherein the compliance template comprising necessary criteria for qualifying the preliminary billing item under the at least one regulatory guideline.